



DODGE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Dale J Schmidt Sheriff Scott Smith Chief Deputy

Law of the Month

February 2017

Required position and method of turning at intersections

As we drive around the streets and highways of Dodge County, often we notice people making improper turns which have the potential to cause crashes. These improper turns also have the potential to disrupt the flow of traffic and can cause other drivers frustration which can also lead to road rage.

Wisconsin statute 346.31 has specific rules regarding how you are to turn, depending on the situation that you are in. When making a right turn, "both the approach for a right turn and the right turn shall be made as closely as practicable to the right-hand edge or curb of the roadway. If, because of the size of the vehicle or the nature of the intersecting roadway, the turn cannot be made from the traffic lane next to the right-hand edge of the roadway, the turn shall be made with due regard for all other traffic."

When making a typical left turn, "the approach for a left turn or U-turn shall be made in the lane farthest to the left which is lawfully available to traffic moving in the direction of travel of the vehicle about to turn left. Unless otherwise marked or posted, this means the lane immediately to the right of the center line or center dividing strip of a 2-way highway and the lane next to the left-hand curb or edge of the roadway of a one-way highway."

Many times on streets with four lanes, two traveling in each direction, we see people completing their right turn by crossing over the closest lane to them into the lane closest to the center line. This maneuver is in violation of state law. You must first occupy the lane closest to you and then conduct a lane change into that second lane to be in compliance with the law.

A violation of Wisconsin State Statute 346.31 will result in a citation in the amount of \$175.30 and three demerit points against their license. A second violation within one year increases the forfeiture to \$213.10.

The sheriff's office encourages you to make safe and legal turns not only for your own safety, but also for the safety of the rest of the motoring public.